

Silverbell Road Task Force

Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Summary of Meeting #2

The second meeting of the Silverbell Road Task Force (SRTF) took place from 6:00 p.m. to 7:50 pm at the Silverbell Golf Course Clubhouse, 3600 North Silverbell Road.

In attendance were these members of the Task Force: Robert De La Cerda, Kendall Elmer, Judith Meyer, Barbara Whitaker, Midge Hardy, Frank Stryker, Michael Mencinger, Angela Wagner-Gabbard, Julie Prince, Gale Marsland, Josh Wright and Hurvie Davis. Sandy Fagan, Bradley Lang and Wain Cooper were absent. Also present were Andy Dinauer, Project Manager for the City of Tucson, Jim Schoen, Project Manager for the Kittelson consultant team, Jason Simmers (Kittelson), Evelyn Urrea (Kaneen Advertising), and Freda Johnson (Rillito Consulting Group).

1. Call Meeting to Order – Confirm Quorum

Freda Johnson, meeting moderator, welcomed everyone and announced that a quorum was present.

2. Introductions of SRTF Members and Project Team

Members of the Task Force introduced themselves and told about their affiliations and interests. Project Team members Andy Dinauer and Jim Schoen introduced themselves as well as did members of the audience, including representatives from Pima County and the Town of Marana.

3. Announcements

Freda introduced this item by saying that the City Clerk was unable to attend this meeting of the Task Force but could do so at a future meeting to clarify procedures required under the City of Tucson's Open Meeting Law. Barbara Whitaker suggested that subcommittees be formed for Task Force members who wished to delve in more deeply into topics. Freda acknowledged that a summary of the first Task Force meeting had been distributed. She said that observers are invited to fill out meeting comment forms as well as address the Task Force during the Call to the Audience. Freda concluded the item with a review of meeting ground rules established by the Task Force on November 4, 2009.

4. Consideration of Electing a Chair and Vice Chair

Freda announced that every committee working on Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) does it differently and that some have chairs and some don't. In response to a question, she said that a chair could open and close the meetings and represent the Task

Force in front of elected officials in the three jurisdictions from time to time. By general agreement, the Task Force requested that this topic be addressed at a future meeting after hearing from the City Clerk's representative.

5. Staff Reports. Presentations and Discussion

Jim Schoen gave information about the project scope in a Power Point presentation. He invited questions and discussion after each of the subtopics. The reports were as follows: Traffic Report, Cross Section Alternative, Path Connectivity Options and Alignment Alternatives.

Following the Traffic Report presentation, Gale Marsland asked about transit and alternate modes of travel. Jim said that all modes would be covered in addition to vehicular travel. Barbara Whitaker said that access and turn lanes are important issues to her. In response to another comment, Jim said that the multiuse path can be more than for walkers and cyclists, but generally it would be used for non-motorized travel. Angela Wagner-Gabbard asked about how lighting would comply with the 'Dark Skies' initiative and why there is no lighting indicated north of Goret Road. Andy Dinauer said that continuous roadway lighting is typically considered to address safety considerations, especially in commercial areas. He said that the City of Tucson installs continuous roadway lighting on arterials but Pima County and the Town of Marana typically do not. The City addresses lighting by using shielded and lighting that shines down and the fixtures that are used are dark skies compliant. Scott Leska from the Town of Marana said that 'Dark Skies' compliance in Marana applies to private development.

Comment was made that the 'segway' vehicle is motorized and that people who own them are not sure where they can travel. Jim said that the right-of-way for the multiuse path needs to be clarified and this information will be provided to the Task Force. Scott said that in Marana segway vehicles are OK on a multiuse path within curbed areas.

Andy Dinauer summarized the projected volumes that dictate the number of lanes in each direction and asked if there is agreement by the Task Force on this recommendation. Kendall Elmer said that the Task Force is in agreement with this information. Jim characterized it as being a four-lane, divided roadway with left turn median openings allowed at specific locations and right turn lanes in each direction at signalized intersections. Julie Prince said she is interested in more clarity about bike lanes and that there be adequate signage for cyclists. Midge Hardy expressed concern about access to her property and the ability of people to turn into and out of her property. Jim said he would sit down with her to work out details of turning movements at that location. Judith Meyer observed that equestrian access and ability of horse trailers to turn into Columbus Park is important.

Jim presented information about cross sections and said that components include a) the median, b) the travel way and c) the shoulder. A typical cross section was presented on a board. Jim said that the minimum standard for all three jurisdictions is 20 feet and that this allows for safe u-turns and left turn staging. He pointed out that Marana requires

outside curbs. The City of Tucson evaluates cross sections on a case-by-case basis. Jim pointed out that an uncurbed median is not necessarily lower in cost though it may provide a rural feel. He asked the group if the team is on the right track with curbed medians throughout. By general agreement, the answer was yes. Judith asked about how water harvesting will work with curbed medians. Andy said that water that falls on the median would be captured there.

A question was asked about who maintains roadways. Andy said that there are intergovernmental agreements between the jurisdictions and maintenance responsibilities are shared in some instances where it makes sense to do so. Regarding the travel way, an 11-foot lane is proposed on the outside and a 12-foot lane is on the inside. Regarding bike lanes, there is variation. For example, Marana specifies a 7-foot lane and calls it a 'multiuse lane'. There is a recommendation for a 1-foot gutter pan, the cement area next to the curb. Frank Stryker observed that many cyclists use Silverbell and a 1-foot gutter is not adequate. He urged that a wider lane would be better. Julie pointed out that a 6-foot lane is preferred by the Bicycle Advisory Committee. She said that safety is an issue as is the ability of riders to be traveling side-by-side. A 7-foot lane with a 2-foot gutter pan would be better. Angela asked how a gutter pan affects water harvesting. Jim said that a gutter pan preserves the life of the pavement. He acknowledged the desire to have wider bike lanes. Andy said that a 6-foot lane would apply to the City of Tucson section and Rick Ellis from Pima County concurred and said that if it's wider, drivers will use it as a turn lane which compromises safety. Pima County and the Town of Marana have compromised on a 6' wide bike lane consisting of 5' of asphalt and a 1' gutter pan. Angela observed that the City doesn't require a gutter pan but Marana and Pima County do. She said that she is concerned about space and by the budget impact. Julie said that costs should consider lives saved with safer facilities for cyclists. Several people spoke in favor of encouraging cycling in the Silverbell corridor.

Discussion took place about whether or not shoulders should be curbed. In Marana, they will be curbed but in Tucson and Pima County they are not necessarily done that way. Pros and cons of curbed vs. uncurbed were reviewed. Some preferred uncurbed because it enhances the rural feel of the area. Jim said that from Goret to Sunset, uncurbed sections can be considered.

Jim summarized aspects of path connectivity in the project. He said there would be a 10-foot multiuse pathway on the east side with some sidewalk on the west for pedestrian connectivity to signalized intersections. Equestrians would cross at intersections with push buttons to activate signals. Judith said she wonders about the advisability of this. Gale Marsland pointed out that a map showing trails shows an existing trail crossing her property. It was clarified that the trails depicted reflect work done by the Pima Trails Association. Staff acknowledged Gale's concern and said they would work to clarify the situation since consent had not been sought or received from the property owner.

Criteria for a roadway alignment were reported and discussed. Jim said that nothing can be built in a floodway and that although the flood plain is wider, building is possible in some cases. Staff said that agreement would be sought on the list of criteria at the next

meeting. Judith said that she would like to know what the cost differences are between curbed and uncurbed sections along the roadway.

6. Next Steps – Future Meeting Dates

By general agreement, the first Wednesday of January would be the date for the next meeting of the Task Force.

7. Call to the Audience

One person rose to address the Task Force, Julian Hadland, who reported his concern about the well being of elderly residents in the corridor. He pointed out the difference between Silverbell, which is near the I-10 corridor and River Road. He reminded everyone that the RTA language says that up to four lanes are desired on Silverbell and he said he prefers a three-lane scenic roadway with a center turn lane. He said that he is still not satisfied with the width of bike lanes and that he is still interested in learning the dates of traffic surveys done for this project.

8. Adjournment

By general agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.